

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE OF THE BOSNIAN AND HERZEGOVINIAN MILITARY

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ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE OF THE BOSNIAN AND HERZEGOVINIAN MILITARY

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ABSTRACT

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Bosnia and Herzegovina is an unusually complex country in a complicated situation, and confronts a challenging path as it pursues development and integration with the rest of Europe. Its Armed Forces have been more successful than most institutions in terms of breaking with the past and illuminating the path forward, but nevertheless still has certain problems. This paper examines the organizational culture of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina which currently is a hybrid of the Bosniak, Croatian, and Serbian legacies. While modifications in organizational structure are undeniably important, an organization's lifeblood is its culture. This study explores Bosnian and Herzegovinian history, analyzes the present challenges, and recommends policies to strengthen its national character and, ultimately, reform the military's organizational culture. Cultural reform in the Bosnian and Herzegovinian Armed Forces will have a positive effect on the rest of society, and will foster the improvements necessary for the country's development and further integration.

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE OF THE BOSNIAN AND HERZEGOVINIAN MILITARY

If you're walking down the right path and you're willing to keep walking, eventually you'll make progress. We have to acknowledge the progress we made, but understand that we still have a long way to go. That things are better, but still not good enough.

—Barack Obama
President of the United States

Fourteen years have passed since the signing of the Dayton Peace agreement which established peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). Bosnian and Herzegovinian society has struggled to build a better future for its citizens, with tangible progress made. However, progress toward Euro-Atlantic integration has not reached the primary goals of joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU).

For Euro-Atlantic integration it is necessary for Bosnia and Herzegovina to undertake certain reforms as determined by the European Commission when it approved the Feasibility Study for Bosnia and Herzegovina at the end of 2003.¹ This opened a new stage towards European integration and triggered negotiations on the shape of the Stabilization and Association Agreement in order to meet the European Commission's requirements. NATO, at its 9th 2009 meeting in Brussels, rejected BiH's efforts to join the organization; a primary reason is the lack of sufficient political reform. However, it should be noted that one of positive example of reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina concerns successful improvements made thus far in the country's Defense Ministry. The Ministry of Defense can be a useful model for other sectors by continuing this trajectory with other qualitative advances.

The organizational culture of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian military is the sphere needing special attention, although change will require time, courage, and patience. This issue has particular importance because of the unique circumstances surrounding the creation of the Bosnia and Herzegovina military. The country's strategic leadership must be mindful of this background and carefully proceed with cultivating a new military culture which is the center of gravity of any effort to improve the Bosnian and Herzegovinian military. A desired culture must be fostered at all levels, starting at the strategic. This study examines the importance of organizational culture and highlights areas of focus in order to create a stable and firm Bosnian and Herzegovinian military.

Background

A defining characteristic of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian military is its ethnic composition. The BiH military consists of three ethnic identities that in the recent past were on opposing sides. Many have written that ethnic animosities in Bosnia and Herzegovina are the result of ancient ethnic hatred. An objective historical appreciation, however, will show that such assertions are inaccurate.

From its first mention in a known historical sources, which date from the tenth century in Constantine Porphyrogenitus' *De Administrando Imperio*² Bosnia and Herzegovina has experienced a very turbulent history. During the second half of Tvrtko's reign (1353 to 1391), Bosnia was the most powerful state in the western Balkans.³ Subsequently, the Bosnia and Herzegovina situation changed significantly. From 1463–1878 BiH experienced what is known in Bosnian history as the "Four Hundred Years of Ottoman Empire Rule." After the Congress of Berlin in July 1878, a

new ruler controlled Bosnia, and until 1918 Bosnia was under the Austria-Hungary Empire.

Before the First World War ended the Bosnia and Herzegovina joined the “State of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians,” later named the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, which ceased to exist immediately after Germany’s attack on Belgrade in April 1941. After the Second World War, Bosnia and Herzegovina become an equal part of federal Yugoslavia; later known as Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY), which broke up in bloodshed in early 1991.

Notwithstanding the abbreviated historical overview, it should be noted that Bosnia and Herzegovina was not created by the 1995 Dayton Peace Agreement. Rather, Bosnia and Herzegovina has a long history and a very rich military heritage and experience. Bosnian and Herzegovinian soldiers have fought wars for two big empires, the Ottoman and Austrian-Hungarian. The Monte Mellette battle is one noteworthy example, where on June 6, 1916 the Second Bosnian and Herzegovinian regiment fought for Austrian-Hungarian monarchy and defeated an Italian army.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has historically shown a significant degree of unity. In earlier times, all soldiers (Muslims, Orthodox, and Catholics) were called Bosniaks. Indeed, the perception that recent Bosnian tragedies are the result of ancient ethnic hatreds does not have historical basis.⁴

So-called ancient ethnic hatred was not in fact widespread in Bosnian society and, therefore, does not have its basis in medieval history. One cannot completely dismiss the existence of animosity between different ethnic communities, but there was far more coexistence, mutual understanding and tolerance than suppressed hatred or open confrontations. Ironically, one can find more ethnic conflicts in twentieth-century Bosnia than during the medieval period from when it is often alleged all this hatred originated.⁵

On the contrary, such theories about ancient animosities may be cynical efforts to portray Bosnia and Herzegovina as a failed state with no future. Strategic leaders, particularly military leaders in BiH, should consider history's lessons and incorporate them into the present Bosnian and Herzegovinian military.

In medieval times Bosnia was a peaceful and tolerant country for all major religions. Indeed, the prosperous Jewish community settled there in the sixteenth century after being expelled from Spain. It was not until the nineteenth century that ethnic hatred became evident,⁶ and it was certainly not limited to Bosnia not differ from others countries in terms of ethnic or religious animosity. Even today in Western Europe there is animosity between Catholics and Protestants.

What makes Bosnia and Herzegovina different from other countries is the fact that Bosnia and Herzegovina was not in past and is not today created as a nation state. Unlike other former republics of Yugoslavia, the First Session of the country-wide Anti-Fascist Council of the National Liberation of Bosnia and Herzegovina held in November 25, 1943 stated *"Bosnia and Herzegovina is not Serbian nor Croatian nor Muslim, but Serbian and Croatian and Muslim."*⁷ This led to the conclusion that any attempt to divide Bosnia and Herzegovina would inevitably lead to conflict or war. The "Karadjordjevo" case; the secret March 1991 meeting between Tudjman and Milosevic, supports this:⁸

Of Yugoslavia's six republics, Bosnia and Herzegovina was the most diverse. It was Yugoslavia in miniature. Unlike the other republics, it had neither a majority national group nor a majority religious community. The 1991 census recorded a population of 4,364,574 of which 43.7 percent were Muslim, 31.4 percent Serb, and 17.3 percent Croat; 5.5 percent identified themselves as Yugoslav.⁹

The breakup of Yugoslavia had its bloodiest chapter in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the Yugoslav political crisis the Yugoslav People Army (JNA) did not take a neutral

stance. The ideology and ethnic structure of JNA leadership very quickly put the JNA on Milosevic's side.

Sixty per cent of officers were Serb; a further 5.4 per cent were 'Yugoslavs' ... and 6.2 per cent were Montenegrins. These all shared a perspective of Yugoslavia that coincided in many ways with that of the neo-Communist Serbian leadership. The political attitudes of the remaining officers were generally to be expected to have a Communist orientation but they were probably less likely to find Milosevic attractive. The ethnic distribution of the rest ... in early 1991 was put at: Croats, 12.6%; Macedonians, 6.3%; Muslims, 2.4%; Slovenes, 2.8%; Albanians, 0.6%; Hungarians, 0.7%; others, 1.6%.¹⁰



Figure 1:

During Yugoslavia's disintegration Bosnia and Herzegovina quickly became the central point of the crisis. Declaring its independence after Slovenia and Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and although an internationally recognized state, an internal war and ethnic cleansing measures resulted in two constituent entities, the Republic of Srpska (RS) – territory under Army of Republic of Srpska (VRS) control and the Croatian

Community of Herceg-Bosna (HZHB) – territory under Croatian Defense Council control (HVO).

These circumstances led to the presence of three armies on Bosnian and Herzegovinian soil. At the outset the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (ARBiH) and the Croatian Defense Council fought a war together against the JNA. Gradually, elements of the JNA transformed into Army of Republic of Srpska which continued to receive arms and support from the JNA. By the end of 1992 the three militaries had become three warring parties. The Washington Agreement signed in March 1994 stopped internal conflict between ARBiH and HVO, and resulted in a new territorial unit that was mobilized from territory under control of ARBiH and HVO. After the Dayton Peace Agreement and the creation of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the ARBiH and HVO were unified into the Army of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (VFBiH).¹¹

For a decade after the Dayton Peace Agreement's signing, two armies existed in Bosnia and Herzegovina. While usually mentioned in the context of stopping the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Dayton Agreement with its Annexes I through XI¹² is also important for its treatment of issues such as elections, arbitration, human rights, refugees and displaced persons, and civilian implementation of the peace settlement. Annex IV of this Agreement represents today's Bosnian and Herzegovinian Constitution, and is very important for all of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its Armed Forces as well.

Because of the nation's circumstances at the time of the agreement, a single military force in accordance with Annex IV was initially infeasible. Annex IV, Article III, paragraph 5a enables the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina to enact

laws with a democratic procedure as defined by Article X;¹³ however, the entire process has been very hard. For example, establishment of single Bosnian and Herzegovinian Ministry of Defense was deemed crucial,¹⁴ but opposition from the Republic of Srpska delayed such an appointment until 2004.¹⁵ The Parliamentary Assembly finally passed the Defense Law in 2005¹⁶ which commenced the establishment of unified armed forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina under a single command and control.

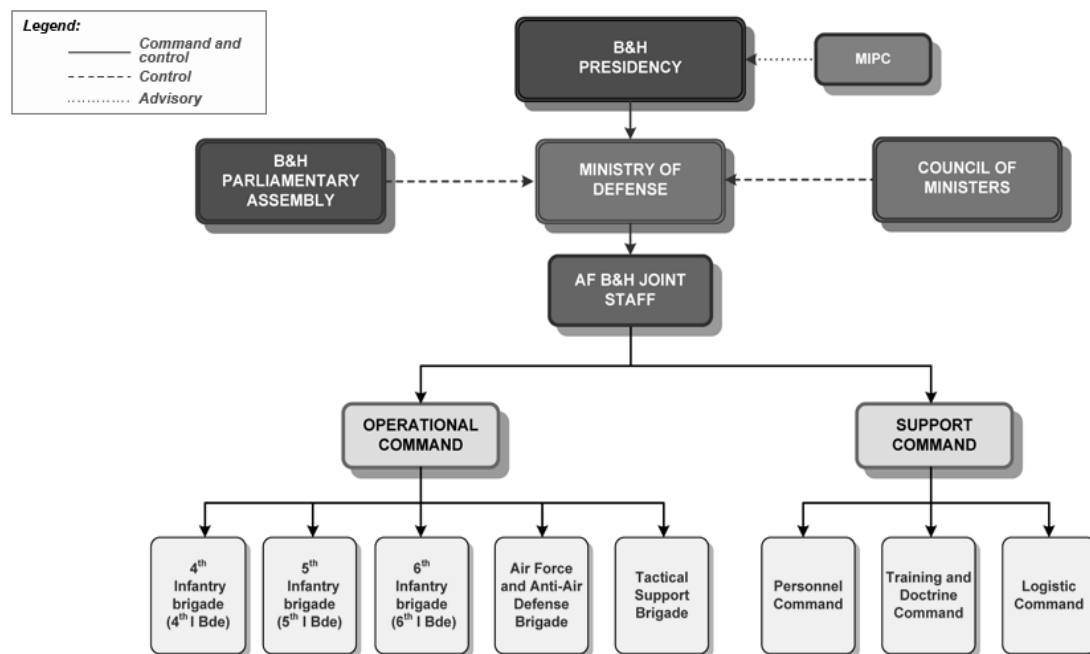


Figure 2: Structure of Bosnian and Herzegovinian Armed Forces

Having described the process which created BiH's unified Armed Forces, it is important to understand the organizational culture surrounding it. This includes understanding the culture's significance, its tangible and intangible aspects, and any assumptions that may be invisible to outsiders.¹⁷ Edgar Schein defines culture as

A pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to

new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.¹⁸

The BiH Armed Forces have adopted tangible symbols to emphasize its national character. One of the most visible parts of any military is the uniform, and BiH's is now identifiable by a unique uniform that does not share any details with those of preceding armies. Ethno-national symbols previously displayed on uniform sleeves have been replaced by the Bosnian and Herzegovinian flag, which is now the only banner flown at military locations.

The Armed Forces have been structured to account for all ethnic affiliations—Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats—and they have been carefully designed to balance ethnicity, numbers, and locations. In accordance with Article 2 Paragraph 3 of the Defense Law, the brigade is the basic formation of the Armed Forces. The brigades are territorial, and both the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Srpska have approximately the same number of brigade headquarters and subordinate units on their respective territories.

The Armed Forces' ethnic makeup comprises 45.9% Bosniaks, 33.6% Serbs, 19.8% Croats and 0.7% other¹⁹. Duty positions are ethnically coded; for example, a particular Brigade Commander must be from a specific ethnicity, and units generally are not integrated. While integration would be a laudatory future goal, Bosnia and Herzegovina's background made this infeasible when the Armed Forces unified former antagonists. Consequently, the Armed Force's first phase required an acceptance of segregated units that would gradually reconcile and become a national force through incremental steps that would not jeopardize the process by attempting changes that would be too radical for prevailing conditions.

The progress to date regarding Bosnia and Herzegovina's defense reform is important in terms of eventually meeting preconditions for membership in the European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). However, additional achievements are required, to include precautions against any negative societal influences that might directly impede the further development of the Armed Forces. Any debate about reforming the Bosnian and Herzegovinian Constitution, which is a basic precondition for EU membership, will also potentially have a significant impact on the Armed Forces. The Constitution, as a state's highest legal document, is very important for the Armed Forces since it defines the functioning of the defense system. Unfortunately, the country's politicians have been unwilling to accomplish the necessary constitutional reforms because of their own culture replete with negative and particularized attitudes.

Achieving the necessary change in organizational culture will take time and will require adroit strategic leadership to address issues that cannot be resolved within existing organizational structures. In some ways the military will have to lead the rest of the country in the desired direction. After five years of consolidating the initial steps in unifying the military, in next phase of reform strategic leaders must improve the currently-insufficient organizational culture, by focusing on leadership as the center of gravity for this effort.

There is a significant interdependence between the current culture and "desired" culture that might be necessary for future unit effectiveness. The engine for this cultural change is the vision of the strategic leader. The ability of strategic leaders to shape organizational culture and values to support the vision while retaining the trust and confidence of all concerned is a major challenge for strategic leaders. There is an interactive dynamic between the development of a vision and cultural change. The process of formulating a vision is greatly influenced by culture and values;

conversely, the pursuit and achievement of vision influences culture and values. External influences also initiate cultural change.²⁰

As stated earlier, the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina are part of Bosnian and Herzegovinian society and societal factors impact the Armed Forces, including its organizational culture. Political leaders who show disrespect to state symbols convey a bad message for the military, as their actions could be easily characterized as a denial of the state.²¹ Some are also behind demilitarization efforts, frequently without constitutional sanction²² which undermine the foundation of the Armed Forces and reinforce sectarian tendencies.²³ Politicians can also have a decisive influence on the selection and assignment of the highest military officers, the strategic military leadership.

Croatia's President Stjepan Mesic recently stated if the Republic of Srpska seceded from BiH he would intervene with Croatian Armed Forces²⁴ This controversial statement has been interpreted both as support for the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and conversely as rhetoric intended to provoke new conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Unmentioned in the debate was the proposition that the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as the only legitimate armed force in the state, should protect the territorial integrity of the state in case of illegitimate secession. That most view such a proposition as lacking credibility indicates much improvement in the BiH military is still required. Even more important than technological progress is the deeper conceptual and attitudinal reform required from the individual soldier to the highest military leader.

The military's culture has both similarities and differences with that in Bosnian and Herzegovinian society. Like politicians and much of the population who view the country as comprising two distinct parts, there is also a distinct division in the Armed

Forces between those who came from the former Army of the Federation and those from the Army of the Republic of Srpska. Since the Bosnian and Herzegovinian goal is to join NATO, the BiH Armed Forces are working hard on adopting and training to all necessary standards. Unfortunately, poor communication exists between politicians in Sarajevo (the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Banja Luka (Republic of Srpska). This poor communication and dissimilar perspective is also reflected in military units, particularly since most key leaders interact with the political authorities of their respective ethnicities.²⁵

The poor political climate and mistrust in BiH society directly affects the climate within the Armed Forces, but a difference is emerging. Unfortunately, BiH politicians in the BiH society are loyal only to their regions and to their political parties; their sense of political responsibility to BiH citizens as a whole almost does not exist. The Armed Forces, however, have a clear and precise chain of command from the lowest unit to the presidency as supreme civil authority over the military. Nevertheless, we should be aware of the political influences on high-ranking officers and, of course, the significance of political parties whose approval is required for certain positions.

Loyalty to the nation-state should be most pronounced for Armed Forces members, who are ready to give their lives on its behalf. Patriotism and the opportunity to serve one's country should be a primary motivation to join the Armed Forces. However, just as some political leaders think in terms of a half-state and take pride in obstructing Bosnia and Herzegovinian unity, some soldiers are obviously motivated by other reasons, particularly economic in nature, and many still feel that their ethnic identity is more important than loyalty to the greater nation. Wearing the flag of Bosnia

and Herzegovina on uniform sleeves does not mean anything if this flag is not in the heart of every one member of the Armed Forces.

Another indicator is the attitude people have to significant historical dates; in most cases the demonstrated allegiance of the general population as well as the armed forces favors ethnic identities, rather than the nation. For example, on Independence Day (or the “Day of Statehood”) half of the state celebrates, but the other half does not. The Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina conform to civilian leadership decisions with regard to state holidays; as a result, half of the Armed Forces will celebrate a given state holiday while the rest has a normal working day. These and other similar examples show the need for a new phase in the evolution of Bosnia and Herzegovina Armed Forces organizational culture. If the previous phase had as its focus the establishment of a single BiH Armed Forces structure, the focus of the next phase must be on the leadership.

Recommendations

Ethnicity is clearly engraved upon the existing organizational structure of the Armed Forces. It is time to advance integration progressively, so that Bosnian, Serbian, and Croatian divisions are not entrenched. While the policy of ethnic proportional representation should be continued, this could be done by a matter of rotation while pursuing greater integration. Until now, the commanders of the 4th, 5th, and 6th Brigades have been Croat, Bosniak, and Serb respectively. Staffs at all levels could be further integrated with other ethnicities in key positions and, eventually, the subordinate commanders and successors chosen from other groups. This rotational policy should be matched with an intensive training program to support integrative policies, as well as rigorous enforcement of regulations against discrimination.

Brigade headquarters are ethnically diverse, although the subordinate infantry battalions are not. The future challenge for strategic leaders is to achieve ethnic diversity at all levels. Not long ago many parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina experienced violent demographic change. In many parts of the country one ethnicity is the majority while the others are minorities. Generally, the battalions from these regions are ethnically homogeneous. While the return, repatriation, and resettling of displaced persons is still in progress, enabling all young people from region to join the Armed Forces would give them a sense of belonging as well as economic benefits and a sense of security. Integration would strengthen unit ties to all sectors of the local population, and successful integration in the military would provide a leavening effect on the rest of society as well.

The key for success, or failure, is the leadership which will either want to make progress or to keep the status quo. The Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina will be limited in its ability to make integration progress that is too far ahead of reformist trends in civilian society. Many policies and initiatives require political approval; an example of this was the early functioning of the Armed Forces.

A familiar Chinese proverb says that the longest trip starts with a single step. Bosnia and Herzegovina's journey has already taken a few small steps; what has been neglected from the very beginning is trust-building. Trust is not proven by mere words; it must be confirmed by example, including examples that may be relatively unimportant. As an illustration, by law alcohol consumption on BiH military posts is prohibited during working hours, which is a normal prohibition in militaries elsewhere. Nevertheless, in some BiH posts the law is widely disregarded, and any insistence on respecting the law

is often dismissed. This issue has unnecessarily acquired a religious context; consequently, the basic issue of military discipline has mutated into a controversy over whether particular religions permit or forbid alcohol consumption. Consequently, it is not unusual to see privates drinking beer during lunch time. Actions are more visible in the military and often take on greater significance; mutual trust and leadership can magnify their impact both positively or negatively.

Involvement of the family in military organizational life is very weak, regardless of ethnicity. A military organization in Bosnia and Herzegovina does not see itself as a kind of society, so social gatherings where family members are present are virtually non-existent. Typically, military gatherings are on post with no family members. Building up cohesiveness among military and their families represents an important challenge for the leadership.

Another recommendation is to plan and conduct a variety of exercises in different parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The coordination should include the relevant civilian structures will help civilian society and the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina in better understanding each other. The Bosnian and Herzegovinian Armed Forces have to be accepted as a legitimate national military force in both BiH entities.

The reality is that the organizational culture of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina is a mixture of three organizational cultures that are based upon their parent ethnicities. It is clear that a new culture cannot be created by a simple change of structure. Certain elements (uniforms, appearance, behavior, actions, procedures, etc.) can be regulated by policies and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). However, certain beliefs which may significantly influence the organizational culture are found in

every individual, and these must be brought to the surface. Some of these beliefs will have to be eliminated, some of them will need improvement, and some will need to be addressed.

The Ministry of Defense (MoD) should field teams of specialists (including psychiatrists and sociologists) to create, administer, and interpret a questionnaire in order to examine opinions of soldiers, NCOs, officers, and civilians. Respondents must be from all three ethnic groups, and the questionnaire should focus on nation-state issues, the Armed Forces, and ethnic issues. Another questionnaire should be developed in collaboration between MoD and the FBiH and RS Ministries of Education; its target group would be students as potential members of the Armed Forces. Opinions and attitudes of the young population are important for two reasons. First, they are potential future members of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Second, they will soon take over the destiny of the state in their own hands.

The Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina is a young organization with numerous problems and challenges. The previous recommendations will not eliminate all problems that have influence on organizational culture. The military will certainly deal with various challenges for a long time, and this will burden the current organization and culture until new qualitative levels are reached. The strategic leadership bears an immense responsibility and they should devote more effort to articulating a future vision, as well as the enabling military plans and activities, rather than muddling through current problems. Strategic leadership must influence stakeholders who can for address specific problems, and these problems should not burden the lower-level units. Members of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Armed Forces should not have to rely upon

media speculation regarding important issues such as joining NATO, integration policies, and the military's future. Soldiers need to be kept informed by a strategic leadership that has articulated a sound vision and has an effective plan for achieving it.

Considerations

The Bosnia and Herzegovina Armed Forces development process will be long-lasting and complicated by certain factors. These challenges are similar to those that most armed forces must wrestle with, but they assume a particular texture with respect to the reform required for Bosnia and Herzegovina to join NATO.

First, Bosnia and Herzegovina's joining of NATO does not just have military and political benefits; it has economic and social significance as well. One of the key benefits of joining NATO applies to the military profession itself. Polls indicate that, only 18% of the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina have full, and 31% partial, confidence in the Armed Forces of BiH. On the other hand, 35% of the citizens do not have confidence in the Armed Forces of BiH, and 12% of the citizens believe that the Armed Forces are not necessary. For any Army these figures, which represent the population's support, would be devastating. Membership in NATO could partially restore the prestige and social status of the military profession. Active participation of BiH soldiers in NATO missions, alongside soldiers of other member countries, and informing the public about their missions, would improve the population's perception about the Armed Forces of BiH.²⁶

Second, the Armed forces are frequently the focus of budgetary discussions; some parties question the military's justification and argue that the country should be demilitarized. Such proposals are often politically motivated, occasionally for secessionist purposes. The future BiH Armed Forces will likely have an international, as

well as domestic, role. Bosnia and Herzegovina's entrance into NATO could help forestall potential conflicts and crisis situations and ensure that issues are resolved democratically, rather than through violence. The Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina cannot be viewed in the context of the Armed Forces that we had in the past. Like other modern armed forces today, it would help protect international stability by actively participating in out-of-country multinational operations.

Third, the long-term burdens on the BiH resulting from personnel mismanagement, lack of harmonization between entity laws and Defense Law particularly those which treat retirement issues, and lack of budget resources have had a cumulative negative influence on the climate within the Armed Forces. Promotion systems and personnel actions are the most frequent source of frustration, especially among soldiers, NCOs, and junior officers. Rejuvenation of the personnel system is one of the major challenges currently facing the Armed Forces. As unemployment is the major problem in BiH, there is little pressure for effective personnel reform.

Joining NATO would definitely have positive effects on the organizational culture of the Armed Forces, and upon the rest of the state as well. NATO membership improves the professionalization and modernization of the armed forces of each member state. Such improved effectiveness of the armed forces implies indirect and direct benefits, such as better security perceptions of the country and its environment, as well as increasing investment in the defense sector and infrastructure. NATO membership has military, political, and economic benefits for each member states²⁷ and BiH should continue the reforms necessary to join the alliance.

Conclusion

Bosnia and Herzegovina has a very turbulent history, and the present is often under attack from a variety of “winds.” Bosnia and Herzegovina sees its future as best served by joining NATO and the EU; however, before joining these organizations certain reforms will be necessary, including further reform of defense system. Considerable success has already been achieved; indeed the mere creation of BiH’s unified Armed Forces from former antagonists is one of these²⁸.

While such success should be welcomed, the next major challenge is the integration of three ethnic cultures into a single military culture that values loyal to the state. Developing this culture will require time, courage and wisdom of the military leadership; everyone in Bosnia and Herzegovina is aware of the requirements and the associated challenges. It is very easy to identify problems, and to be obstructionist, particularly since changes must be orchestrated both in the military and among civilians, particularly with politicians.

Changing organizational culture is difficult, but not impossible. In 1995, immediately after the conflict, it was almost unthinkable that Bosnia and Herzegovina would soon have former enemies together in a barracks under the same flag. Leadership will require patience and vision to control the process and close the gap between the current state and the desired condition. Leadership must be aware of the positive and negative societal influences on the development of Armed Forces culture. While changing the culture, the strategic leadership should envision the Armed Forces in ten years and focus on the steps required to shape both the Armed Forces and the surrounding society. This writer is confident that with successful strategic leadership the

future soldier of Bosnia and Herzegovina from Banja Luka will not feel insecurity in Sarajevo, and his comrade from Sarajevo will feel equally at home in Banja Luka.

Endnotes

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³ Noel Malcolm, *Bosnia: a short history* (New York University Press, New York and London, 1994), 13.

⁴ The Bosnians – elite troops of the Joint Army, <http://gebirgskrieg.heim.at/5110.htm> (accessed February 6, 2010). For further historical information, see Noel Malcolm's *Bosnia: a Short History*, Neven Andjelic's *Bosnia-Herzegovina: The End of a Legacy*, and Ivan Lovrenovic's *Bosnia: A Cultural History*.

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⁶ Noel Malcolm, *Bosnia: a short history* (New York University Press, New York and London, 1994), 126-127.

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⁸ Neven Andjelic, *Bosnia-Herzegovina The End of a Legacy* (Frank Cass Publishers, 2003), 199.

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¹⁶ Defense Law of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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